

Message Text

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PAGE 01 RANGOO 02424 01 OF 02 130719Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3985

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 RANGOON 2424

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, EAID, BM, JA

SUBJ: FUKUDA'S VISIT TO RANGOON

BEGIN SUMMARY

JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA AND PARTY CONCLUDED AN APPARENTLY SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO BURMA ON AUGUST 12. ALTHOUGH FULL DETAILS OF THE VISIT ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE, THE STATEMENTS RELEASED AT THE END OF THE VISIT INDICATE FUKUDA HAD CORDIAL TALKS WITH GUB PRESIDENT NE WIN AND PRIME MINISTER MAUNG MAUNG KHA, BOTH OF WHOM ACCEPTED FUKUDA'S INVITATION TO VISIT JAPAN. JAPAN IS BURMA'S LEADING AID DONOR AND THE FUKUDA PARTY PROBABLY PROMISED ADDITIONAL JAPANESE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. FUKUDA AND NE WIN REPORTEDLY HELD A CORDIAL TALK FILLED WITH ANECDOTES AND REMINISCENCES, BUT THEY LEFT DETAILS OF AID MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT LOWER LEVELS. AMONG THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, JAPAN IS IN THE BEST POSITION TO INFLUENCE BURMESE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POLICIES. ADDITIONAL
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PAGE 02 RANGOO 02424 01 OF 02 130719Z

INFORMATION ON THE VISIT WILL BE REPORTED AS IT BECOMES AVAILABLE. END SUMMARY.

1. JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER TAKEO FUKUDA AND HIS 48-MEMBER OFFICIAL PARTY, WHICH INCLUDED THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY, PARLIAMENT MEMBERS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS, COMPLETED THEIR

THREE-DAY VISIT TO BURMA ON AUGUST 12. BURMA WAS THE ONLY NON-ASEAN COUNTRY INCLUDED ON FUKUDA'S ASIAN TOUR FOLLOWING THE KUALA LUMPUR CONFERENCE. THE VISIT SERVED TO UNDERSCORE JAPAN'S ROLE AS BURMA'S LEADING AID DONOR AND TRADE PARTNER. EVERY JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER SINCE 1956 HAS VISITED BURMA, AND PRESIDENT NE WIN HAS MADE AT LEAST FOUR TRIPS TO JAPAN.

2. ALTHOUGH DETAILS OF THE SUBSTANTIVE TALKS HELD DURING FUKUDA'S STAY ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE, FROM ALL OUTWARD APPEARANCES THE VISIT WENT OFF VERY WELL THE BURMESE WERE OBVIOUSLY SEEKING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM JAPAN, WHICH HAS CONTRIBUTED SOME \$260 MILLION IN DEVELOPMENT AID TO BURMA OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS. ACCORDING TO SEVERAL RELIABLE SOURCES, THE JAPANESE WERE WILLING TO DISCUSS ASSISTANCE FOR OFFSHORE FISHERIES, OFFSHORE OIL EXPLORATION, A FERTILIZER PLANT, A PETRO-CHEMICAL COMPLEX, A CEMENT PLANT AND AN EXPANSION OF A VEHICLE ASSEMBLY PLANT. THERE WERE ALSO TO BE TALKS ON ADDITIONAL RICE PURCHASES WHICH THE GOJ MAKES FROM BURMA FOR DELIVERY TO THIRD COUNTRIES, MAINLY BANGLADESH AND INDONESIA.

3. IN HIS ARRIVAL STATEMENT FUKUDA SAID HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO CONSTRUCTIVE TALKS WITH GUB LEADERS WHICH WOULD STRENGTHEN THE TRADITIONAL FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND FIND WAYS IN WHICH THEY COULD JOINTLY CON-
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PAGE 03 RANGOO 02424 01 OF 02 130719Z

TRIBUTE TO THE PEACE AND PROSPERITY OF ASIA. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE VISIT (TEXT BEING POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT AND TOKYO) NOTED THAT DURING FUDUDA'S CALL ON PRESIDENT NE WIN THE TWO LEADERS RECONFIRMED THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS AND MUTUAL TRUST WHICH EXIST BETWEEN JAPAN AND BURMA, AND THEY EXCHANGED VIEWS ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. THE COMMUNIQUE SAID FUKUDA' TALKS WITH GUB PRIME MINISTER U MAUNG MAUNG KHA CENTERED ON TOPICS OF BILATERAL INTEREST; THE LEADERS EXCHANGED FRANK VIEWS ON RECENT INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS; AND REAFFIRMED THAT ALL COUNTRIES IN THE REGION SHOULD WORK TOGETHER FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS ASIA IN A SPIRIT OF MUTUAL RESPECT AND NON-INTERFERENCE. FUKUDA REAFFIRMED JAPAN'S POLICY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES, AND SAID JAPAN WOULD CONTINUE TO EXTEND POSITIVE COOPERATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY OF BURMA. THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO NOTED THAT FUKUDA EXPLAINED THE TALKS HE HAD WITH ASEAN LEADERS AND THAT JAPAN HIGHLY APPRECIATED THE SELF-RELIANT AND INDEPENDENT SPIRIT OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES. FURTHER, BOTH SIDES EXPRESSED SATISFACTION OVER THE ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SO FAR EXTENDED BY JAPAN TO BURMA

AND THEY AGREED ON THE DESIRABILITY OF FURTHER EXPANSION OF BILATERAL TRADE. FINALLY, THE COMMUNIQUE ANNOUNCED THAT FUKUDA EXTENDED AN INVITATION TO THE GUB PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER TO VISIT JAPAN AND THAT THE INVITATION WAS ACCEPTED (NO DATES FOR THE VISIT WERE ANNOUNCED).

4. AN INFORMED SOURCE WITH THE FUKUDA PARTY SAID THAT FUKUDA'S TALKS WITH NE WIN INCLUDED AN EXCHANGE OF ANECDOTES AND NE WIN REMINISCED ON HIS WORLD WAR II EXPERIENCES WHILE TRAINING WITH THE "THIRTY COMRADES" IN JAPAN. ON SOMEWHAT MORE SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS, NE WIN EXPOUNDED ON THE GUB'S CONDITIONS FOR ACCEPTING AID (THERE MUST BE NO STRINGS ETC.), AND FUKUDA STRESSED THE NON-MILITARY NATURE OF JAPAN'S INTEREST IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. FUKUDA ALSO SAID HE THOUGHT CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 RANGOO 02424 01 OF 02 130719Z

THERE WOULD BE NO ASEAN-INDOCHINA CONFLICT. THE TWO LEADERS REPORTEDLY DID NOT DISCUSS ANY SPECIFIC JAPANESE AID PROPOSALS FOR BURMA, PERHAPS LEAVING THIS TOPIC TO BE TAKEN UP AT LOWER LEVEL TALKS.

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PAGE 01 RANGOO 02424 02 OF 02 130735Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 RANGOON 2424

5. ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON THE TALKS AND RESULTS OF THE VISIT WILL BE REPORTED AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE.

6. COMMENT: WE EXPECT FURTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS ON ADDITIONAL JAPANESE AID COMMITMENTS FOR BURMA TO BE FORTHCOMING. THE BURMESE WOULD REGARD THE VISIT AS A FAILURE IF IT RESULTED IN NO ADDITIONAL JAPANESE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, AND MANY OF THE DETAILS FOR SUCH ASSISTANCE HAD BEEN WORKED OUT IN ADVANCE OF THE VISIT.

7. WHILE JAPANESE ECONOMIC INROADS IN BURMA MAY SOMETIMES BE AT ODDS WITH U.S. BUSINESS INTERESTS, THE LEVERAGE JAPAN HAS GAINED FROM ITS ASSISTANCE PLUS THE WARM REGARD NE WIN FEELS TOWARD JAPAN AS THE RESULT OF HIS TRAINING THERE DURING WORLD WAR II PLACE JAPAN IN THE BEST POSITION AMONG THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO INFLUENCE BURMESE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POLICIES. THE U.S. MAY FIND THIS INFLUENCE A VALUABLE ASSET IN ATTAINING BURMESE COOPERATION IN INTER-CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 RANGOO 02424 02 OF 02 130735Z

NATIONAL FORA AND IN STIMULATING THE BURMESE ECONOMY TO CONTRIBUTE A GREATER DEGREE THAN AT PRESENT OF ITS POTENTIAL TOWARD REGIONAL AND WORLD ECONOMIC WELL-BEING.
BARTLEY

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